

Montero House closing strands students

By CHANTAL M. LOVELL, Staff Writer

Posted: 04/26/2010 01:43:57 PM PDT

REDLANDS - Come June, developmentally challenged adults may be out of luck - or at least out of a place to spend their weekdays.

Montero House - the educational program for developmentally challenged adults in the Redlands Unified School District, will close at the end of the school year - said Redlands Adult School Principal John Massie.

"That's one of the programs we will not have funding for," Massie said.

The district cut funding for adult programs when the state allowed them to use that money to fund mandated K-12 programs. The Workforce Investment Act grant just received by the adult school will keep some programs open but does not cover programs for challenged adults.

Carmen Peoples has been the Montero House teacher for 21 years.

Peoples said the Montero House's closing will be detrimental to students who depend so heavily on the program.

"It's a place that offers so many different skills

and they learn pretty much to be independent," Peoples said. "If (Montero House) closed, (the students) will have no place to go."

Peoples said the 18 adults currently enrolled at Montero House spend their weekdays doing arts and crafts, working on computers and learning spelling and math. They also clean the house, garden, and cook to learn independent living skills and manners.

The gardens at Montero House - created and maintained by students - have won awards, Peoples said.

Pamela Eisenhardt - whose 39-year-old daughter has been going to Montero House for about 15 years - said other programs for developmentally disabled adults do not compare.

"The other programs she's gone to are so low functioning," Eisenhardt said. "At other programs they just walk them around town and call it 'community integration.' I don't want her doing that. At Montero House, they have cooking, computers, gardening, wood shop, bowling, they make and sell crafts."

With the help of Peoples and other volunteers, the students build and paint wood figures, door hangers, decorative garden posts and holiday items. They sell the crafts and keep some of the money.

Peoples said a lot can be learned from painting a wooden rabbit centerpiece, as students did last

Advertisement

Kodak

IF YOU'RE NOT PRINTING ON A KODAK ESP ALL-IN-ONE PRINTER, CHANCES ARE
YOU'RE PAYING TOO MUCH FOR INK.

FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU'RE OVERPAYING FOR INK AT PRINTANDPROSPER.COM

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**

week. They learn to take and follow directions, work with their hands, and behavioral problems start to disappear.

"For me personally, the benefit has been getting (my daughter) on track of not talking so much and helping her to stay focused," said parent Oleta Montgomery, whose daughter has attended Montero House for 10 years. "In one month, I saw my daughter go from talking constantly, getting up and down, to sitting still and not talking which had not been accomplished in all the years she wet from kindergarten on."

Eisenhardt said her daughter has also improved while attending Montero House.

"She can say a word now where she never said a word before," Eisenhardt said. "She can say `ya' and she knows it means `yes.' She puts dishes in the sink, brings coffee cups to me indicating she wants a drink of water. It may seem insignificant to most people, but not to me."

Several students have become American citizens while at Montero House with Peoples' help. Two students were the first in their families to become citizens and encouraged their parents and siblings to follow their lead, Peoples said.

Others, like 50-year-old Sandra Osborne, have been able to move into their own apartments since coming to Montero House, Peoples said. Osborne has been coming to the program for four and a half years and made the move last

year, she said.

Peoples said the community supports Montero House through donations.

"This is a prized program for the community because the community has been the one supporting us," she said. "They see that people with special needs are not dangerous, they are human. They feel emotion and they show love and they show respect if you treat them with respect."

She said much of the program is funded by the grants she applies for and donations from the community.

"We get grants from the (Redlands Horticultural and Improvement Society), we get grants from the Kiwanis club, we get grant from the Knights of Columbus, we get money from the Contemporary Club," Peoples said. "People who walk by and see us ask us what we need."

She said Representative Jerry Lewis has also been a big supporter of Montero House.

But those grants and donations are not enough to keep the program running next year when the district's board of education has voted not to fund adult education, Massie said.

Montero House costs the district about \$100,000 annually, he said.

"They get donations but not on a scale to keep it

Advertisement



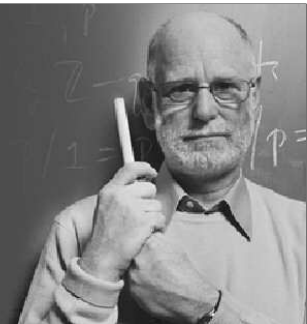
Florida Tech
UNIVERSITY ONLINE



APPLY TODAY!

FloridaTechOnline.com/FD | 1-888-253-5946

Bring the Classroom to Your Home
With a Degree Online From Florida Tech



Print Powered By FormatDynamics™

redlandsdailyfacts.com

open," Massie said. "If the state starts providing money for adults with disability (we will offer the program)."

The district has encouraged parents to contact their case workers to find alternative programs for their students, Massie said. But Parents say there are not other suitable programs for their children and they will be stuck without Montero House.

"I can't just take her to any program because this is a secure place and everybody here is safe," Montgomery said.

"It's going to mean staying home," Eisenhardt said.

The district continues to encourage those concerned with budget cuts to write their state representatives and tell them how they will be personally affected by funding cuts to education.

Write Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger at:

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger State Capitol
Building Sacramento, CA 95814

Write Assemblyman Bill Emmerson at:

Assemblyman Bill Emmerson State Capitol
Building Sacramento, CA 95814

or

10681 Foothill Blvd., Suite 325 Rancho

Cucamonga, CA 91730

E-mail Staff Writer Chantal M. Lovell at
clovell@redlandsdailyfacts.com

Advertisement

 UNIVERSITY of SAN FRANCISCO	End-to-End Training as It Should Be: 100% ONLINE!	
	Earn Your Master Certificate in Internet Marketing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ SEO & Paid Search→ Online Branding→ Web Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Internet Law→ Media Buying→ Social Media
	 1-800-268-9943 USanFranOnline.com/FD	

Print Powered By  **FormatDynamics™**